

CALIFORNIA. ~~STATE~~ BOARD OF HEALTH.

MONTHLY BULLETIN.

*Entered as second-class matter August 15, 1905, at the post office at
Sacramento, California, under the Act of Congress of July 16, 1894.*

Vol. 2.

SACRAMENTO, FEBRUARY, 1907.

No. 9

STATE BOARD OF HEALTH.

MARTIN REGENSBURGER, M.D., <i>President,</i> San Francisco	F. K. AINSWORTH, M.D. San Francisco
WALLACE A. BRIGGS, M.D., <i>Vice-President,</i> Sacramento	A. C. HART, M.D. Sacramento
N. K. FOSTER, M.D., <i>Secretary</i>	O. STANSBURY, M.D. Chico
	W. LE MOYNE WILLS, M.D. Los Angeles

HON. J. A. ELSTON, *Attorney* Oakland

STATE BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS.

N. K. FOSTER, M.D., *State Registrar* .. Sacramento | GEORGE D. LESLIE, *Statistician*

STATE HYGIENIC LABORATORY.

ARCHIBALD R. WARD, D.V.M., *Director* University of California, Berkeley

NOTICE TO CORONERS.

Definite Statements of Causes of Death.—The attention of coroners is directed to the requirement of section 6 of the law for the registration of deaths that: "Causes of death which may be the result of either disease or violence shall be carefully defined; and, if from violence, its nature shall be stated, and whether accidental, suicidal, or homicidal." Deaths from violence should always state the character, as accidental, suicidal, or homicidal, in addition to the means of death. "Accidental drowning," "Gunshot wound (suicide)," and "Poisoned by arsenic (murder)," are examples of complete returns.

In all cases of accidental injuries causing death, the nature of the accident should be definitely stated, as, "Accidental gunshot wounds," "Injuries by machinery," "Injuries in mines and quarries," "Railroad or street car accidents or injuries," "Injuries by horses or other animals," "Automobile accidents," etc.

Furthermore, when under section 7 of the death registration law coroners investigate deaths occurring without medical attendance and not resulting from violence, they must to properly comply with the law investigate each case sufficiently to determine some specific disease as the cause of death. The return "natural causes" is worthless for statistical purposes, nor is the term "heart failure" any better, since the heart always "fails" before death from any cause. In investigating any death not from violence, coroners must invariably certify to some specific disease as the cause of death, as tuberculosis, pneumonia, heart disease, Bright's disease, apoplexy, etc.

The fact that California has the honor of being included by the Federal Census Bureau among the 16 registration states makes it very important that causes of death be stated definitely on all our certificates. The coöperation of coroners is therefore sought to the end that in all cases investigated by them the cause of death will be given with proper definiteness.

MODIFICATIONS OF REGISTRATION LAW.

Chapters 92 and 236 of the Statutes of 1907 make certain modifications of the law for the registration of vital statistics first enacted in 1905. The changes meet the difficulties encountered in the operation of the law during the past two years and serve to make the law as it now stands less rigid in operation than before and also more uniform in minor details.

Temporary Removal of Body.—The rigidity of the law is lessened especially by amendments to sections 4 and 10 of the law for the registration of deaths. Section 4 now provides that for the purpose of being prepared for burial or shipment a body may be removed without formal permission from the registration district where the death occurred, to another registration district in the same county, or to a contiguous registration district in a different county. Thus, without a formal permit, a body may be removed temporarily from a residence in the rural portion of a county or in a separately incorporated suburb to an undertaker's establishment in a city where proper facilities are available for preparing the body for burial or shipment. Of course, before making the final burial or shipment, the undertaker must, as in the past, first secure a permit for the interment or removal of the body from the registrar of the registration district where the death occurred.

Permit for Burial in Contiguous District.—Section 10 of the death registration law, as amended, authorizes the registrar of the district where a death occurs to issue a burial permit, which is legal authority for an interment not only in the district where the death occurred but also in a contiguous registration district in the same or an adjoining county. Thus, the registrar of deaths in a city where no burials take place may now issue a burial permit authorizing an interment (or cremation) at a cemetery in a contiguous registration district, as in a neighboring city, in the rural portion of the same county, or even in a different but adjoining county. The formality of issuing a removal permit and of attaching to it a complete copy of the certificate of death is now required only in case the interment is to be made in some registration district not contiguous to that in which the death occurred, as, for instance, where a body is to be shipped by any transportation company or common carrier for interment at a distant point in California or at some place in another State.

Time for Reports—Local Records—Numbering Certificates—Supplying Blanks.—Uniformity in details is secured by the amendment of sections 3 and 9 of the death registration law, so that certificates of deaths or reports of no deaths must now be transmitted to the State Registrar on or before the fifth day of each month, the fifth day being the date heretofore set for the transmittal of certificates of births and marriages. By the amendment of section 3078 of the Political Code the local record of births and marriages, as of deaths in the past, is required to be kept upon a form identical with the original certificate. Similarly, the local registrar must begin new numbers each calendar year for birth and marriage certificates, as for death certificates, and must also sign his name as registrar in attest of the date of filing in his office in all cases. Section 9 of the death registration law, as amended, specifically requires the board of supervisors of the county to supply local registrars with blank forms of death certificates, as well as of blank birth and marriage certificates as specifically required before.

Fund for Fees—Subregistrars' Compensation.—By the amendment of section 14 of the death registration law it is definitely provided that a county recorder's fees for registering deaths in the unincorporated portion of a county shall be paid out of the funds of the county, just as the fees for registering births and marriages are expressly payable out of the county funds. Provision is also made for the compensation of subregistrars, who are now entitled to be paid the sum of not exceeding fifteen cents for each death certificate properly and completely registered and filed with the local registrar before the fifth day of the month. All amounts payable to subregistrars shall be paid to them by the local registrars appointing them, from the amounts received by the local registrars from the funds of the county.

Affidavits of Correction.—Section 3083 of the Political Code and section 13 of the death registration law, as amended, simplify the procedure of correcting errors in certificates of births, marriages, or deaths by providing that the change necessary to make the record correct may be made upon authority of the affidavit under oath of the person asserting the fact of an error, to be supported by the affidavit of one other credible person having knowledge of the facts.

VITAL STATISTICS FOR FEBRUARY.

Summary.—For February there were reported 1,779 living births; 2,310 deaths, exclusive of stillbirths, and 1,607 marriages. For an estimated State population of 2,001,193 in 1907, these figures give annual rates per 1,000 inhabitants, as follows: Births, 11.6; deaths, 15.0, and marriages, 10.5. The corresponding rates for January were, respectively, 10.4, 14.6, and 10.3.

The number of marriages was highest for San Francisco, 362, and next for Los Angeles county, 352. The counties next in order were: Alameda, 197; Santa Clara, 58; Sacramento, 54; and Orange, 50.

The birth total was greatest for San Francisco, 377, and next for Los Angeles city, 359. The freeholders' charter cities with the next highest totals were: Oakland, 129; Sacramento, 45; Fresno, 35; Pasadena, 32; San José, 28; Berkeley, 27; and Stockton, 21.

The death list was greatest for San Francisco, 553, followed by Los Angeles city, 356, and Oakland, 145. The cities next in order were: San Diego, 57; Sacramento, 52; Stockton, 40; Berkeley, 39; Alameda, 31; Pasadena, 28; San Bernardino, 25; San José, 21; and Fresno, 20.

It may be noted that the births reported exceeded the deaths in the cities of Los Angeles, Pasadena, San José, and Fresno. If physicians were as sure to register births as undertakers have to be to register deaths, or even if physicians in all parts of California attended to the registration of births as well as they do in some cities, the State total of births would doubtless equal or exceed the aggregate number of deaths.

The deaths reported for February were distributed by geographic divisions, as follows: Northern California—coast counties, 105; interior counties, 135; total, 240. Central California—San Francisco, 553; other bay counties, 344; coast counties, 137; interior counties, 317; total, 1,351. Southern California—Los Angeles, 508; other counties, 211; total, 719. State total, 2,310.

Causes of Death.—There were 386 deaths, or 16.6 per cent of all reported for February, from tuberculosis of the lungs and other organs, and 376, or 16.3 per cent, from pneumonia and other diseases of the

respiratory system. In January there were a few more deaths from pneumonia, etc., than from all forms of tuberculosis. Third in order, as usual, are diseases of the circulatory system, heart disease, etc., causing 306 deaths in February, or 13.3 per cent.

Typhoid fever, as before, was the most fatal epidemic disease, causing 30 deaths, against 20 for diphtheria and croup, 14 for measles, 13 for whooping-cough, 12 for influenza, and 14 for various other epidemic diseases. However, the per cent of all deaths due to typhoid fever was only 1.3 for February, against 1.9 for January, 3.5 for December, and over 4.0 for November and October.

Detailed figures on causes of deaths in California appear in the table below, which shows the number of deaths due to certain principal causes for February, as well as the proportion from each cause per 1,000 total deaths for both February and January.

Cause of Death.	Deaths: February, 1907.	Proportion per 1,000.	
		February, 1907.	January, 1907.
ALL CAUSES.....	2,310	1,000.0	1,000.0
Typhoid fever.....	30	13.0	18.6
Malarial fever.....	4	1.7	0.8
Smallpox.....	1	0.4	-----
Measles.....	14	6.1	6.1
Scarlet fever.....	4	1.7	2.8
Whooping-cough.....	13	5.6	2.0
Diphtheria and croup.....	20	8.7	8.1
Influenza.....	12	5.2	5.3
Other epidemic diseases.....	5	2.2	4.4
Tuberculosis of lungs.....	341	147.6	142.6
Tuberculosis of other organs.....	43	18.6	15.0
Cancer.....	102	44.2	46.9
Other general diseases.....	86	37.2	38.4
Meningitis.....	41	17.7	21.0
Other diseases of nervous system.....	195	84.4	80.8
Diseases of circulatory system.....	306	132.5	142.2
Pneumonia and broncho-pneumonia.....	282	122.1	118.4
Other diseases of respiratory system.....	94	40.7	46.1
Diarrhea and enteritis, under 2 years.....	27	11.7	13.7
Diarrhea and enteritis, 2 years and over.....	17	7.4	6.1
Other diseases of digestive system.....	106	45.9	40.8
Bright's disease and nephritis.....	140	60.6	61.8
Childbirth.....	20	8.7	4.8
Early infancy.....	70	30.3	29.5
Suicide.....	47	20.3	17.4
Other violence.....	159	68.8	63.8
All other causes.....	131	56.7	62.6

CALIFORNIA PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION.

As announced in the January Bulletin, the California Public Health Association will meet at Del Monte, Monterey, at 2 p. m. April 15th, with the following

PROGRAM.

- 2:00 p. m. Greetings by the President,
DR. WM. SIMPSON, San José.
- 2:30 p. m. Geology of Underground Waters and Mineral Springs,
PROF. HENRY JOHNSON, Palo Alto.
- 3:30 p. m. The Effect of School Life on Children's Health,
DR CHAS. F. CLARK, Woodland.

RECESS.

- 7:30 p. m.
DR. A. E. OSBORNE, Santa Clara.
- 8:30 p. m. Questions and discussions on any subject desired pertaining to sanitation or health of mankind.

At the time of going to press the subject of Dr. Osborne's paper had not been received, but from the Doctor's long experience with children, and his careful study of their mental, nervous, and physical conditions we can be assured that whatever the branch of the subject of child life he may select its treatment will be vigorous, scientific, and interesting.

The President of the Association, Dr. Simpson, of San José, has made a strong effort to insure an interesting meeting, and it now depends upon the health officers of the State, and all others interested in good health, and especially in the well-being of the children, to turn out and make it a success.

Although not entirely given over to the study of child life, the intention is to make that the main topic of discussion, and certainly there is none which needs to be discussed more than this.

PURE FOOD AND SANITARY LEGISLATION.

The Legislature which has just adjourned enacted several laws which are of great importance to the State, looked at from the standpoint of public health.

First among them are undoubtedly the Pure Food and Pure Drug laws. These laws were passed only after long and frequent hearing and consultations in the Public Health committees of the Assembly and Senate—hearings in which all industries affected by the laws were given full opportunities to express their views. As far as definitions and requirements go, these laws are nearly identical with the national law. The standard of purity and strength in that law was adopted in these, and the rules and regulations adopted by the United States Department of Agriculture for its enforcement will undoubtedly be adopted in this State. The advantage of this uniformity must be apparent to all, as it would be much more difficult to enforce a law where two standards of purity existed.

The enforcement of the Act is put upon the State Board of Health, which is required to establish a laboratory and appoint a director, who must be a skilled pharmaceutical chemist. Agents can be appointed as necessity requires, and every sheriff in the State is made an agent of the Board, and must collect samples for analysis whenever called upon to do so. The interests of the manufacturers and dealers are safeguarded against any unjust attempt to do them injury; but the punishment by a fine of not less than twenty-five nor more than five hundred dollars, or by imprisonment not exceeding six months, or by both, and the certainty of getting an undesirable advertising, should deter them from inflicting impure adulterated food and drugs upon the public.

* * *

Another law which was enacted in the interest of sanitation makes it a misdemeanor "to discharge mucus from the nose or mouth, or spit upon any sidewalk of any public street or highway, or upon any part of any public building or railroad train, street car, stage, ferry-boat, steamboat, or other vessel or vehicle used for the transportation of the public." The value of this law will be appreciated by all who have observed—and who has not?—the terribly foul condition of all the places enumerated caused by the filthy and dangerous habit of public spitting.

* * *

In the past there has been no State law requiring physicians and others to report communicable diseases. Local ordinances required it,

but a person outside the jurisdiction of that local ordinance was under no such obligation to do so. This is remedied by a law requiring the reporting, by physicians, nurses, and others, of all communicable diseases, including pulmonary tuberculosis. This should be strictly observed and enforced throughout the State, for it is impossible to successfully combat a contagious disease, the location of which is unknown.

* * *

There is now in the Governor's hands awaiting his signature a bill passed by both houses of the Legislature, appropriating \$2,000 to be used in disseminating knowledge among the people of California as to the best means of preventing the spread of tuberculosis. As more than four thousand die each year in the State from this disease, \$2,000 is not much with which to attempt to save them. It is less than fifty cents each; but where so many are dying from a disease which might have easily been prevented had they only known how, untold good can be done with this small amount.

HUNGRY SCHOOL CHILDREN.

“‘After bread, education is the first need of the people.’ So runs Danton's fine phrase which has been inscribed upon one of the finest public monuments of Paris, and which the visitor frequently sees displayed in the public schools of France. More than two thousand years before Danton, Aristotle had said the same thing in a phrase not less luminous or striking than that of the French revolutionist. ‘First the body must be trained, and *then* the understanding,’ declared the great philosopher.

“That education is a social necessity is no longer seriously questioned, but the other idea of the French revolutionist and the older philosopher, that education must come after bread—that it is alike foolish and cruel to attempt to educate a hungry child—is often lost sight of. In the early days of the agitation for free and compulsory education it was not infrequently urged that before the state should undertake to compel a child to attend its schools and receive its instruction it ought to provide for the adequate feeding of the child to enable it to receive the education. That argument, happily, did not prevent the establishment and development of public education, but now that the latter institution has been firmly rooted in the soil of our social system, there is an increasing belief in the inherent wisdom and justice of the claim that the state has no moral right to attempt to educate an unfed or underfed child.

“Apart from the question of moral right is the unwisdom of such a policy. All practical educators agree that the money and effort spent in the endeavor to instruct hungry or underfed children are largely wasted. Superintendent Maxwell of the New York public schools sums up the experience of the ages when he says, ‘Education, whether physical or mental, is seriously retarded, if not practically impossible, when the body is improperly nourished.’ Horace Greeley expressed the same truth many years ago, when he said in a lecture to teachers: ‘In vain shall we provide capable teachers and comfortable school-rooms, and the most admirable school books, apparatus, libraries, etc., for those children who come shivering and skulking in rags—who sit distorted by the gnawings of hunger or suffering from the effects of innutritious or unwholesome food. * * *’ Nothing more grotesque or shortsighted can well be imagined than our present policy of lavishing money upon

the vain effort to educate those children, to be found in such large numbers in our public schools, who, because they are inadequately nourished, can not profit by the expenditure."

The above from John Spargo's "Underfed School Children, the Problem and the Remedy," opens a whole chapter of thought for one interested in the proper development of the children.

In California, where the severe conditions of life are greatly modified by the fertility of the soil, mildness of climate, and general prosperity, there are not in our public schools such a proportionately large number of underfed children as in the large cities of the East, but if any one interested in the subject will take the pains to visit some of our schools, talk with pupils and teachers, or even watch the pinched and careworn faces of the little children, he will soon become convinced that even prosperous California has many underfed children. Watch these children for a few years and you will find that they become the street hoodlums, and that the inmates of jails and prisons are recruited from their ranks. As Greeley said, "In vain shall we provide capable teachers and comfortable school-rooms, and the most admirable school books, apparatus, libraries, etc., for those children who come shivering and skulking in rags—who sit distorted by the gnawings of hunger or suffering from the effects of innutritious or unwholesome food." They can not apply themselves to the task at hand, and suffer mentally and morally as a consequence. Much of the crime which fills our prisons and the pauperism and degeneracy which fill our hospitals could be traced back to the poor nutrition and underfeeding of the little ones.

It is equally disastrous to them physically, for the underfed child does not attain the same development as the one having proper nourishment. They are of smaller stature, have less developed vital organs, and have little resisting power, and if they live to adult age easily fall victims to disease. Consumption, the great white plague, which is carrying off one-seventh of our population, finds its easiest victims in the poorly nourished children, and any fight against that scourge which does not take into account this factor will fall far short of accomplishing all it seeks to do.

Looked at from whatever point of view you choose, the subject is of the deepest interest and concern to the State. Do we want to lessen the population of our prisons and asylums? Are we ambitious to produce a race of robust, independent men and women? Do we want to wipe out consumption and kindred diseases of low vitality? If so, we must look to the children and see that their physical development is properly guarded. No young animal can rightly develop without sufficient food, and the young human has no advantage in this respect over his cousins.

Without plenty of good nourishing food with which to begin the day the average child can not develop its physical strength, to say nothing of doing the school work allotted. As a result, we get our sickly, flat-chested children, who have a slight grip upon life, but who live to propagate a race with equally low vitality—our discouraged ones, who run away from school to find more inviting fields and who fill our prisons, and the others who soon fall by the wayside, victims to the diseases which make havoc in child life.

The need for some provision to feed the underfed children is manifest even here in prosperous California. Many of the European countries are progressing along this line, and some to a considerable degree. A

few of our own states are attempting to furnish breakfast to those who need it. The plan is opposed by some on the plea that it will pauperize the child; but free education had to meet the same objection. Free school books, which are furnished in many places, and will some time be in all, are no more pauperizing than a free breakfast, nor are they as necessary as the breakfast to the hungry child.

MEASLES A DANGEROUS DISEASE.

During the last six months of 1905 and the first six of 1906, 128 deaths occurred in California from measles—almost three times as many as from scarlet fever. These figures do not represent the unknown number who died from troubles arising as complications, such as pneumonia and consumption; a number which is, no doubt, several times as large.

Notwithstanding this death-rate, measles is considered by very many an unimportant disease, and we not infrequently hear a mother say, "The baby has got to have them some time, and it might as well be now," and unnecessarily exposes the child. It is needless to say that this should never be done, but, on the contrary, every precaution should be taken to guard the child against the danger of infection.

It may be impossible to keep all children free from the disease, but it is entirely unnecessary and greatly to be deplored that any one be purposely exposed. Instead, every means should be taken to confine the disease and protect others.

The question is often asked if measles should be quarantined. A person with measles should most certainly be quarantined and not allowed, until past the possibility of communicating the disease, to mingle with others. The disregard of this precaution has caused the death of many a child, and whoever neglects it is, in a measure, responsible for such deaths.

The disease is actively contagious, but it is doubtful if any one not actually connected with the care of the patient would carry the disease to others on their person or clothing, unless they were themselves infected.

This fact can be taken advantage of, and the patient isolated in some remote part of the house so that the bread-winners of the family can still go about their work. To do this with safety it is necessary that the utmost care be honestly taken.

The room selected should be as remote as possible from the living apartments, and should be free from all unnecessary articles, such as drapery, carpets, upholstery, books, etc., and should be well aired and kept clean by wiping with a cloth dampened with some disinfecting fluid. Sweeping should be avoided, as lung complications are very liable to occur, and the dust caused by sweeping is an added danger.

Nothing should be taken from the sick room until disinfected, and all food left should be at once destroyed. The nurse should not leave the sick room to mingle with the family, and when necessary to leave it, should have a change of clothing. Children are very susceptible to measles, and should not be allowed to go to school or mingle with other children when the disease is in the family. They are oftentimes infectious, and will give the disease before any symptoms are manifest, hence the necessity of keeping those in the family who are apparently well away from other children.